

Helms Shift Not Due To Rift, Kissinger Says

Presidential adviser Henry A. Kissinger denied yesterday a report in Monday's Star-News that a serious policy disagreement between him and CIA director Richard M. Helms is a factor behind Helms' impending resignation as intelligence director.

A White House official said Kissinger indicated in one of his calls from Paris yesterday that it was "directly contrary to the truth" to suggest that he was in any way instrumental in President Nixon's as yet unannounced decision to reassign Helms.

Kissinger was likewise reported to be appalled at any inference that Helms should be stepping down as U.S. intelligence chief because of a disagreement between him and Helms.

Kissinger's denial did not relate to any specific points in the Star-News account, which reported that a conflict arose over Helms' position

in 1969 over whether the Soviet Union, with its massive SS-9 missile, was going for a "first-strike" capability.

Neither did Kissinger's demurral contain a specific denial that a policy disagreement, in fact, existed.

A White House official explained that Kissinger and top administration officials are concerned that Helms' reassignment away from the CIA to another position of responsibility not be given a negative interpretation.

Helms' intention to resign as director of Central Intelligence was reported late last week by high administration sources, who have indicated that an official announcement is being held up so Helms can decide whether to accept the other job being offered him. There have been no indications what the new assignment is to be.

Efforts to reach Helms have been unavailing.